

REMARKS

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner:

(1) objected to the drawings and required corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d);

(2) objected to the disclosure because of grammatical and typographical errors and required appropriate correction;

(3) rejected claims 1-11 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Hayes-Roth (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0028498); and

(4) rejected claim 12 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hayes-Roth as applied to claims 1-11 above and further in view of Nakisa (U.S. Patent No. 6,,968,315).

In response to Item 1 above, Applicants are submitting herewith corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d). More particularly, Applicants are submitting Figs. 1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 13-14, 20, 22, 24-32 and 36-39, each of which are labeled "Replacement Sheet". Applicants do not believe that Fig. 3, 5, 6, 8-10, 12, 15-19, 21, 23, 33-35 contain any hand-drawn figures, and thus do not need to be corrected.

In response to Item 2 above, Applicants have amended the specification to correct the typographical errors pointed out by the Examiner. Applicants note that the terms "SerialGroupSkill" and "AmbuLocoGroup" are used as examples of animations and thus have not been corrected.

In response to Items 3 and 4 above, Applicants have amended claim 1 in order to more clearly define the present invention and distinguish it from the prior art. More particularly, claim 1, as amended, calls for a method for doing business comprising providing an individual with a virtual environment and at least one virtual element within said virtual environment and enabling

a customer to add an additional virtual element to the virtual environment, wherein the enabling is effected by: (i) requiring the customer to buy a product which is different than the additional virtual element, and (ii) as a consequence of the customer's purchase of the product, supplying the customer with access to the additional virtual element, whereby to induce the customer to buy the product.

In contrast, Hayes-Roth discloses a human-like computer-based customizable expert agent which is used to interact with and assist a user in the same manner as a human expert agent would assist a user. In essence, Hayes-Roth uses a virtual human to provide a help function to a user. Hayes-Roth does not disclose Applicants' method of doing business which includes, among other things, inducing the sale of products by tying the sale of products to the acquisition of a premium, i.e., an additional virtual element for populating a virtual environment. Thus, Applicants do not believe that the present invention is anticipated by Hayes-Roth.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that claim 1 is in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

In addition, claims 3-10 and 12-15, which depend from claim 1, either directly or indirectly, are believed to be allowable at least through dependency.

New Claim 16 has been added to call for an additional method for doing business in accordance with the present invention.

Thus, Applicants believe that this patent application is now in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

In the event that any fees may be required in this matter,

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please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0221.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret M. Slezak", written over the typed name.

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